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For: Signal Processing Apparatus and Methods

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Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
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A multiple input/output video switch system is located at the video head of each cable system. This video switch system includes a local video signal generator and a video switch for each programmed channel (ESPN, LIFE, TNN) having local available commercial time slots. The video switches applies, at its output, either the programmed channel signal received by the cable system from a first telecommunications network, the commercial insert signal received from the second telecommunications network or the local video signal, all dependent upon switch commands sent from the control center via the second telecommunications network.

A mechanism is provided in the video switch system for producing a frame blanking video signal intermediate the application of the programmed channel signal, the commercial insert signal and the local video signal and another mechanism for generating characters for each particular spot commercial. Also, the switch system can overlay video text on the commercial inserts and can substitute the locally generated video signal for certain commercial insert spots if those spots promote entertainment on non-available programmed channels. Further, a record keeping system is disclosed which records the frequency and playtime of each commercial insert on each programmed channel.

4. Service of papers (complete (a) (b) or (c))

(a) No service of papers is required since this prior art citation is by or on behalf of the patent owner.

(b) In accordance with 37 CFR 1.501 (c), a copy of the attached papers has been sent by first class mail postage paid to attorney of record for the patent owner addressed as follows:

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(c) Service on the patent owner is not possible and the attached papers are in duplicate.